

June 21, 2004

RE: *4th National Community Impact Assessment Workshop*

The Maine Department of Transportation (MAINEDOT) is pleased to host the Fourth National Community Impact Assessment Workshop in Portland, Maine from August 22 through the 26. Optional activities are available on August 21 and 22. The Workshop is endorsed by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Community Impact Assessment Subcommittee, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Transportation Research Board. The Workshop is designed to promote the latest information on the integration of transportation planning and decision-making with cultural change, community impact assessment, land use planning, conflict resolution, and tools to engage the public.

Transportation investments can have major influences on society, with significant economic and social consequences. Community Impact Assessment, or CIA, is an iterative process to evaluate the effects of a proposed transportation action on a community and their quality of life. The assessment process is an integral part of project planning and development that shapes the transportation decision-making process from its inception in planning, continuing into the project development and environmental studies phase, and through construction, operation and maintenance. The Assessment provides documentation of the current and anticipated social environment of a geographic area with and without the proposed action. Assessments focus on current and future issues that affect the community and the quality of life of its people. It commences early and continuously gathers and evaluates information from the community and other sources. Topics of concern include: mobility, safety, employment effects, community cohesion, isolation, access to public facilities and services, and other community issues.


Who should attend the Fourth National CIA Workshop? Transportation planners, CIA practitioners, land use planners, city, local and state engineers, transportation and environmental professionals, State DOTs, FHWA, rail and transit planners, community advocates and academician.

The intent of the 2004 National Workshop is to shift the focus of our studies from “measuring” effects to “understanding and shaping” the transportation effects during the decision-making process. The Workshop will provide the mindset and tools to investigate the current and future needs of the adjacent communities, the potential transportation facility effects and proposed transportation solutions in the positive context of the community and the citizens in the context of the use of the highways, railways and transit facilities that we build.

A national steering committee, chaired by the Maine Department of Transportation, Bureau of Planning, and consisting of representatives from across the country with expertise in analyzing the transportation-related effects on communities and land-use, developed the agenda topics for the Fourth National CIA Workshop. This National Workshop promotes methods to Institutionalize, Integrate, and Engage Community Impact Assessment, land use planning and transportation principles into the way transportation planning and decision-making is conducted today and in the future.

Please join me at the Marriott at Sable Oaks, South Portland, Maine to increase awareness of the effects of transportation actions on the human environment. No longer can the consequences of transportation investments on communities be ignored or allowed to be a last minute reaction to public outcry. Learn the process of moving to the next step from measuring the human environment impacts to understanding and shaping the transportation decision-making process. The Fourth National CIA Workshop will provide you and your staff with tools, principles and methods to positively influence transportation policies, decisions and investments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D. Cole", written in a cursive style.

David A. Cole, Commissioner
Maine Department of Transportation